

Dear Committee Members;

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Dr. Larry Sonnenberg . I am a Board Certified Family Practice doctor from Bozeman, Mt. . I have practiced medicine in Montana since 1987. I have delivered babies and taken care of grandmothers.

I am in favor of this bill for a number of reasons. After dealing with girls and young ladies I have learned a few things. Among them is you are almost always dealing with two patients, the patient and their mother. **Mothers** are almost without fail their **daughter's best advocate**. Therefore, by encouraging parental notification I think this bill will help **safeguard the patient rather than restrict the procedure**.

I've always been perplexed about the fact no parental notification or consent is needed for a minor's abortion. **Why should we treat abortion differently** than any other surgical procedure ? Is it safer? Absolutely not. **Complications that can occur** are bleeding, perforation of the uterus, infection, maternal death, and psychological impacts. Shouldn't this person have their best advocate available to ensure the best possible care is provided. Would we expect our daughter to choose the best qualified surgeon to repair her injured knee or even repair a laceration on their face? We dote over each other after these type of surgeries and call the physician with the smallest concern. If the parents aren't even aware that an invasive procedure has been performed how can this occur?

Furthermore, the concept of consent is very important. We are trained to obtain consent from the patient . It is our responsibility to explain the procedure, its potential risks and inherit complications. In nearly all other situations that consent is obtained from a parent. **Why does a pregnant 15 year old suddenly have the capacity to fully understand the consequences** of an abortion when **with every other procedure we would consult and obtain permission from her parent**. After the abortion does she automatically loose that ability? Afterwards do we allow her to function as an adult, drink alcohol, join the army, or sign major contracts —of course not. But, this bill does not revoke the patient's right to consent to an abortion, however it **does give pause in the process to allow the patient time to think** about involving not just the abortion clinic personnel or the reluctant father but the most important people in her life---her parents.

While intercourse is natural abortions are not. Many aborted pregnancies are not planned or wanted. They are the result of spontaneous sexual activity, lack of protection, or poor judgment. The **decision making process of a teenager doesn't improve because she is pregnant**, infact her situation can be very desparate and can cloud her thinking process. She can be very vulnerable during this time to undue influence. Therefore, I feel that **she should be encouraged to seek counsel with her best support system—which is generally her family**.

Therefore, I think this bill will make abortions safer by helping ensure the patient's support system is accessed and their best advocates can be available for physical and emotional support. **Wouldn't you want that for your own daughters?**

Thankyou,

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